

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. Clear or translucent aqueous fabric softening composition comprising polyquaternary ammonium softener compound and less than about 15% by weight of the composition of organic solvent, said composition containing 5%, or less, by volume of secondary dispersed phase.
2. The composition of Claim 1 wherein there is less than about 3% by volume of said secondary dispersed phase.
3. The composition of Claim 1 wherein there is less than about 1% by volume of said secondary dispersed phase.
4. The composition of Claim 1 wherein said composition is essentially free of secondary dispersed phase.
5. Clear, or translucent liquid fabric softener composition comprising:
 - A. from about 1% to about 80% by weight of the composition, of polyquaternary ammonium fabric softener active which either has a phase transition temperature in the presence of less than about 5% organic solvent or water of less than about 50°C or which has no significant endothermic phase transition in the region -50°C to 100°C, said active being in a bilayer;
 - B. an effective amount of stabilizer for maintaining said composition clear or translucent comprising:
 - (1) an effective level of organic solvent;
 - (2) an effective amount of bilayer modifier; and
 - (3) mixtures thereof;
 - C. optional additional fabric softener active and/or cationic charge booster;the balance water.
6. The composition of Claim 5 wherein said polyquaternary ammonium salt has a phase transition temperature in the presence of less than about 5% organic solvent or water of less than about 35°C and is present at a level of from about 5% to about 75% by weight of the composition; and

wherein said organic solvent, in the absence of an effective amount of bilayer modifier, comprises principal solvent having a ClogP of from about -2.0 to about 2.6 at a level of at least about 0.25% and less than about 13.5% by weight of the composition.

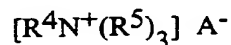
7. The composition of Claim 5 wherein said polyquaternary ammonium salt has a phase transition temperature in the presence of less than about 5% organic solvent or water of less than about 20°C and is present at a level of from about 15% to about 70% by weight of the composition; and

wherein said organic solvent, in the absence of an effective amount of bilayer modifier, comprises principal solvent having a ClogP of from about -1.7 to about 1.6 at a level of at least about 0.25% by weight of the composition and less than about 10% by weight of the composition.

8. The composition of Claim 5 wherein said polyquaternary ammonium salt has a phase transition temperature in the presence of less than about 5% organic solvent or water of less than about 10°C and is present at a level of from about 19% to about 65% by weight of the composition; and wherein said organic solvent, in the absence of an effective amount of bilayer modifier, comprises principal solvent having a ClogP of from about -1.0 to about 1.0 at a level of at least about 0.5% by weight of the composition and less than about 7.5% by weight of the composition.

9. The composition of any of Claims 5-8 containing bilayer modifier.

10. The composition of Claim 9 wherein said bilayer modifier comprises single long chain quaternary ammonium compound of the general formula:



wherein R^4 is C₈-C₂₂ alkyl or alkenyl group;

each R^5 is a C₁-C₆ alkyl or substituted alkyl group, benzyl group, hydrogen, polyethoxylated chain with from about 2 to about 50 oxyethylene units; and

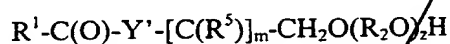
A^- is defined as a fabric softener compatible counterion.

11. The composition of Claim 9 or Claim 10 wherein said bilayer modifier comprises from about 0.25% to about 20% by weight of the composition of polar and/or non-polar hydrophobic oil.

12. The composition of any of Claims 9-11 wherein said bilayer modifier comprises nonionic surfactant containing from about 6 to about 22 carbon atoms in a hydrophobic chain ethoxylated with from about 2 to about ≤ 50 ethoxy groups.

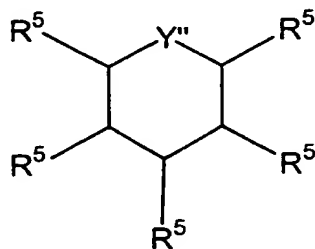
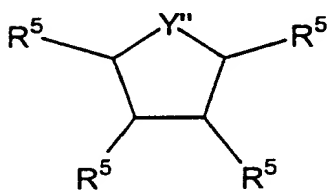
13. The composition of any of Claims 9-12 wherein said bilayer modifier comprises nonionic surfactants with bulky head group selected from:

1. surfactants having the formula



wherein R^1 is selected from the group consisting of saturated or unsaturated, primary, secondary or branched chain alkyl or alkyl-aryl hydrocarbons; said hydrocarbon chain containing from about 6 to about 22 carbon atoms; Y' is selected from the following groups: $-O-$; $-N(A)-$; and/or mixtures thereof; A is selected from the following groups: H ; R^1 ; $-(R^2-O)_z-H$; $-(CH_2)_xCH_3$; phenyl, or substituted aryl, wherein $0 \leq x \leq \text{about } 3$ and z is from about 5 to about 30; each R^2 is selected from the following groups or combinations of the following groups: $-(CH_2)_n-$ wherein n is from about 1 to about 4 and/or $-[CH(CH_3)CH_2]-$; and each R^5 is selected from the following groups: $-OH$; and $-O(R^2O)_z-H$; and m is from about 2 to about 4;

2. surfactants having the formulas:

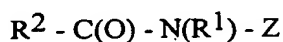


wherein $Y'' = N$ or O ; and each R^5 is selected independently from the following:

$-H$, $-OH$, $-(CH_2)_xCH_3$, $-O(OR^2)_z-H$, $-OR^1$, $-OC(O)R^1$, and $-CH(CH_2-(OR^2)_z-H)-CH_2-(OR^2)_z-$

$C(O)R^1$, x and R^1 are as defined above and $5 \leq z$, z' , and $z'' \leq 20$;

3. polyhydroxy fatty acid amide surfactants of the formula:



wherein: each R^1 is H , C_1 - C_4 hydrocarbyl, C_1 - C_4 alkoxyalkyl, or hydroxyalkyl; and R^2 is a C_5 - C_{31} hydrocarbyl moiety; and each Z is a polyhydroxyhydrocarbyl moiety having a linear

hydrocarbonyl chain with at least 3 hydroxyls directly connected to the chain, or an ethoxylated derivative thereof; and each R' is H or a cyclic mono- or poly-saccharide, or alkoxylated derivative thereof; and

4. mixtures thereof.

14. The composition of claim 1, further comprising an effective amount of an additional softener active.

15. The composition of claim 14 wherein said additional softener active has a single quaternary moiety and two long hydrophobic moieties.

16. The composition of claim 1, wherein said composition has a microstructure bordered by a phase comprising liquid crystals.

17. The composition of claim 1, wherein said composition has a microstructure that is bordered by a phase with the optical property of birefringence.

18. The composition of claim 1, wherein said composition comprises bilayers.

19. The composition of claim 1, wherein said composition comprises vesicles.

20. The composition of claims 1, wherein said composition comprises bicontinuous bilayers.

21. The method of determining the stability of aqueous clear or translucent softening composition comprising polyquaternary ammonium softener compound comprising subjecting said composition to high-speed centrifugation and measuring the % volume of secondary phase which separates.

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